

September 7, 1955

Dear Kim:

Thank you for your comment on my letter. I have sent it to Science, but have no idea if or when it will be published. I have a number of copies now, one is enclosed if you care for it. (It is changed only by the addition of two sentences to explain what the SCIENCE editorial said.)

I hope you will consider Detrick very carefully, especially before accepting it. If it is such an admirable setup, why did Werner prefer to leave? I won't forget patriotic motivations either, but if you turn out unhappy there, everyone will be the loser.

I want to renew the topic I brought up in an earlier letter, not having realized then the pressure of time. To put it bluntly, there is an outside chance that the idea of a medical genetics department can be put over here, at Wisconsin. This would not necessitate, at the start, an activity in human genetics per se, though this ought to be brought in eventually. It should mean a person with some clinical background and interest, who might put some life into a brief course (I would imagine about 15 lecture hours), and more important, who could educate his colleagues. They are a pretty wide awake bunch here, especially when it comes to chemistry and physiology, but genetics has been overlooked at the medical school probably because no one has put any steam into it. Your research would, of course, have to be your own business. I had thought of trying to play a full, direct role in such a program, but doubt that I would be well enough qualified, at the clinical side. It may take some time to get this proposal under way, but my preliminary talks with Dean Bowers have been very satisfactory. You need take no part or interest in this early maneuvering, except to tell me explicitly to stop if I'm wasting my time as far as you are concerned.

What are the chances of your paying us an early visit, the sooner the better? The chances are, I can arrange for support from the University Lectures Committee; if not, and you're not too extravagant, we can scrape up your plane fare some other way. This would have no overt connection with the previous subject, but I would like very much to have a chance to talk to you about this and innumerable other things. There are any number of people here who would be anxious to hear your work on radiation effects, and we've had all too few chances to assess the state of the world ourselves. But concretely, let me know if there any time between about September 20 and November 1 that you could pay us a visit.

Sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg